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Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative
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BUREAU OF WATER PROTECTION AND PLANNING
PLANNING & STANDARDS DIVISION

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Paul Stacey
Bureau of Water Protection,
DEP, 79 Elm St., Hartford, CT 06106.

Dear Paul Stacey,

I support the new streamflow regulations and want them completed without being weakened. **However, it is important that the regulations be revised to protect Class 4 waterways.** Connecticut is blessed with abundant rainfall and strong drinking water standards. However 20th century development patterns have resulted in water quality and quantity problems that have degraded waterways throughout the state. For this reason, **I am deeply concerned that the draft regulations do not indicate a criteria for healthy urban (class 4) streams.** Consider how water quality is degraded within the Town of West Hartford. Clean stream waters flow from the Metacomet Ridge and the MDC drinking water reservoirs, yet when this water reaches the channel that parallels Trout Brook Drive it is impaired. Impaired waters flow into Hartford via the South Branch of the Park River. If there are no state regulations to uphold the public value of clean water in urban areas it is very likely that small streams will be further neglected – indefinitely. The degradation of urban waters is an environmental justice problem. Moreover, further degradation of our urban waterways will negatively impact regional rivers, such as the Connecticut River and the Long Island Sound.

We discovered many beautiful waterways and water bodies integrated into urban and suburban communities during recent (2008-2009) streamwalks arranged by The Childrens Museum with support from an EPA "Healthy Communities" program grant. Clearly, the ecological health of stream reaches depends upon adjacent land uses and relationship of the property owner to the natural environment.

The draft regulations, as proposed, have no standards for keeping Class 4 streams alive. There is no language at all saying what level of ecological health the stream must maintain. If these streams are written off the state, property owners will become discouraged and abandon their neighborhood streams. Many people seeking healthy natural places move out of cities and dense suburbs (such as West Hartford) into rural areas, which has caused a cycle of sprawl that is damaging our natural environment throughout the state. **Class 4 must be eliminated, or changed so that every stream in the state will have some level of protection.**

Please ensure that the Class 4 streams will have adequate protection by the state of Connecticut.

Thank you,

Mary Rickel Pelletier
Project Director, Park River Watershed Revitalization Initiative
in collaboration with the Farmington River Watershed Association